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Mt. Gretna—Origin of the Name.

BY HUGH M. MAXWELL,

PHILADELPHIA, PA.

Letter to the Society. Read April 26, 1901.

Colonial Events: East. Pennsylvania and Schaefferstown

BY JOHN M. KRALL,
SCHAEFFERSTOWN, PA.

A Story of the Quittapahille

BY REV. P. C. CROLL, A. M.,
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MT. GRETN—ORIGIN OF THE NAME.

Letter to the Society. Read April 26, 1901.

, BY HUGH M. MAXWELL.

Assuming that your Society will care to have all the data, past, present and future, to which interest attaches as relating to Lebanon County, I give herewith the origin of a name known to very few, but familiar to many as a place of local, State and National significance, Mt. Gretna.

The location was first chosen as an ideal picnic ground, and was soon selected by the State for a summer encampment of the Pennsylvania troops, and likewise by the United States for the same purpose, the object of the encampments being that of military training.

"Governor Dick," the most prominent point on the surrounding hills, or as they are fancifully called mountains, acquired distinction by having been used by the State for observation purposes when the last Geological Survey of Pennsylvania was made.

The structure thereon erected for that purpose consisted of nothing more than four full length chestnut tree trunks planted in the ground at an angle which brought the tops of the big poles to a smaller square than the base, and were securely braced with boards nailed on horizontally, and provided with strong steps to the top, where a well-made floor formed a place from which observations were taken.

Such was the "observatory," and it was sufficient for the purpose intended, besides giving to the mountain an added distinction to its local character, and since the opening of

the railroad passing over the North range of the same hill, "Governor Dick," has been a feature of Mt. Gretna.

But the "Gretna" end of the name has another story.

It is this.

When the line of railroad from Lebanon and Conewago was nearing completion and getting ready for business, a committee of three was appointed by the Board of Directors to go over the route and locate and name stations. This committee was composed of Robert H. Coleman, President of the Company; John C. Jennings, General Superintendent, and the writer, who was then Secretary and Treasurer of the Company.

The time set for the committee did not suit the President, and the duty was done by Mr. Jennings and myself.

In the doing we came to a place thickly wooded and more thickly over-grown with under bush, where a single track wagon road leading down the big hill on the North side, crossing the railroad and on down toward the distant brook, through tall, overhanging green briers, a wild garden of the forest, and seemingly a road to mountain solitude.

We thought our road should have a picnic ground somewhere on the line of it as a pleasure resort and as a traffic feeder. For that purpose no better place could be found.

A suitable name did not suggest itself to our minds, and so, making a note of the station to be, passed on to Conewago, doing what we had set out to do.

When I returned to my home in the evening at Cornwall, I told Mrs. Maxwell what we had been doing and how we were at a loss for a name for the station we had located for a picnic ground.

Without hesitating my good wife said, "Why not call it Gretna?"

Further suggestion was unnecessary. I thanked her heartily for her good help, glad to have such a pretty, suitable and uncommon name to report.

At the next meeting of the Board the committee made its

report and to fill the vacancy on our list I offered the name "Gretna."

Mr. Jennings said he would like to amend, that "Governor Dick" had some local distinction, and that name would give the idea of a mountain place which he thought desirable to keep in view and would say "Mt. Gretna."

I appreciated the wisdom of so naming the place, and our report was adopted. Thereby a new made name was officially recognized, and quickly became popular as a pleasant and attractive picnic ground; although the money spent in putting the place in CULTIVATED order left none of the wilderness of its original condition. The name, "Mt. Gretna," therefore, is of Lebanon county birth, and its history incident thereto.

Already the historian might find much to say about Mt. Gretna. State and Nation have honored it.

Various other factors of material and intellectual progress have chosen it for their use; and since it came into existence eighteen years ago it has been favorably heard of whether the newspaper has gone. The uses made of the place may cease, but the name and its goodly fame will endure in the history of Mount Gretna; and as a part of that of Lebanon county.

That favorite resort was a means of making the Cornwall and Lebanon Railroad well known in a short time. An incident in its history of passing interest, now well nigh forgotten, though the records will always show it, was the absorption of the Colebrook Valley Railroad Company, an organization chartered to build a railroad from Conewago to Cornwall, and had the road bed graded before the Cornwall and Lebanon Railroad Company was chartered to build a road from Lebanon to Cornwall, where, by connecting with the C. R. R. would give a continuous line across country between and connecting two great railroad systems, the P. R. R. and the P. & R.

Before the completion of either of these new lines the necessity for two separate organizations had passed away, and they were merged.

As provided in the articles of merger the Colebrook Valley Company ceased to have an existence, the Cornwall and Lebanon becoming sole legatee of its estate and assuming all its obligations.

The retention of the corporate name of the smaller and younger company as the heir, was a matter of choice.

The capital stock of the companies at the time of the merger was owned chiefly by one man, Robert H. Coleman, a man whose forceful energy contributed much to the history of Lebanon county, and who deserved a better lot than finally befel him.

The foregoing facts being ~~within my personal~~ knowledge and as having historical interest, some of it more than local, I am glad to lay them before your Society for its use.

COLONIAL EVENTS:

Eastern Pennsylvania and Schaefferstown.

BY JOHN M. KRALL.

Twelve years after the founding of the City of Brotherly Love, on the banks of the Delaware, a party of adventurous Jews, of a commercial turn of mind, landed at the newly-constructed wharf of the new city, with the determination of penetrating the wilds of the new Commonwealth. So westward they wended their way through the main thoroughfare of the city, up through the valley of the Schuylkill, passing the sites of the undreamed of cities, towns and villages, such as Norristown, Phoenixville, Limerick, Pottstown, Birdsboro and Reading, which, after a long period of time, were to be developed. They finally reached the waiting point of Tulpehocken creek and the Schuylkill river, then trudged sturdily onward, following the course of the creek, until they reached what was afterwards called the Millbach Valley, through which they passed, taking a southwesterly course, until they arrived at the foot hills of the South Mountain, where they halted and set to work building a cluster of log cabins, with tools of the simplest and most ordinary kind. While busily engaged at this arduous and severe labor, the natives who were quite numerous in the vicinity, gathered around the embryonic village, and expressed their disapproval of the boldness of the strange intruders, with grunts and angry exclamations. The Jews, however, with all their inherited shrewdness and cunning, made known to the Indians through signs, notions and gestures that their object in coming to settle among them was not to oppose

them, or show any animosity whatsoever, but to serve them and advance their interests in a manner that would be highly appreciated by the natives. That their object was to trade with them and the adjacent tribes, or rather with all the various tribes of the continent, if possible. The Jews then exhibited their various kinds of wares, to the Indian callers, such as jewelry, beads, fancy buttons, skeins of thread, fancy braids, fancy hose and every article imaginable sufficiently bright and gaudy to catch the fancy of the purchasers in prospective. The Jews then in the best manner possible intimated that the wares they exhibited were intended to be used as article of barter in exchange for all kinds of furs ~~and pelts which they~~, the natives, might secure and bring, from time to time to the village or post, which was, from that time designated as the Lebanon fur trading post, named after the world-famed Lebanon in Palestine, the home of the unrivalled cedars, and also the place of nativity of the ancestors of these wandering commercial Jews. These Jews eventually became so popular and esteemed by the aborigines that from as far west as beyond the Mississippi and from as far Northeast as the shores of the great lakes the Indians flocked to the Lebanon fur trading post to do their trading. The reader will here learn that the arrow heads found in the freshly-cultivated fields in the different localities of the Eastern States were hewn, shaped and sharpened parts of flint not found east of the Alleghanies, but on the shores of Lakes Superior and Michigan. It is a well-known historical fact that the Indians were great wanderers, we might say migratory, like the buffaloes, and different species of birds. So then the Jews, having met with success as to their manipulation of the Indian trade, sent glowing accounts of the manifold attractions and opportunities for advancement in the New World, to their friends and relatives, residing in the Old World, across the Atlantic. The result was, that a number of their friends and relatives, spurred on by the success of their pioneer friends, made all the preliminary arrangements, and set sail for the New World, when, after many days of tempest-tossed and nial de mere trials, landed at the Philadelphia wharf, followed the

course their preceders had taken, and reached the haven their friends had prepared for them. The accession of these newcomers caused the necessity for the construction of additional buildings, which being completed and occupied, the desire arose among these faithful sons of Abraham to also erect a synagogue and a regular consecrated burial ground or cemetery. The synagogue served its purpose throughout the lapse of time the fur traders remained in the vicinity, but after their departure the building became dilapidated, and when our oldest churches were being erected the synagogue was demolished to make room for another building. The burial place, about sixty feet square, with a perfect stone wall surrounding it, remained intact until the summer of 1877, when the party owning the surrounding premises tore it away, and used the stones for building the foundation of an out-kitchen. The author accompanied Bayard Taylor to view the place, in the summer of 1869, who was very much delighted with its perfect preservation, and on account of its being one of the very oldest landmarks in Eastern Pennsylvania. One of the original log buildings is still there in a fair condition. The Lebanon Fur Trading Post was for years one of the most important in North America until A. D., 1730, when the Indians' bartering attention was drawn to other fur trading posts, which had been established from time to time in various parts of the French, Dutch and English colonies. About the time when the Jews were experiencing and lamenting the gradual lessening of their trade, when their far distant patrons ceased darkening their doors and naturally their zealous interest was languishing, Alexander Schaeffer, a native Swabian from Heidelberg on the Rhine, who had some years before settled on a table land on one of the mountains near the Cornwall Ore Hills, which mountain, after his residing there, has since been named the Swabian Mountain. The Cornwall and Manheim railroad crosses the mountain at the southeastern end. Now then Alexander Schaeffer, tired and weary of the monotonous and lonely mountain life, came to the Jews at the trading post, with view and intention of founding an important town, to persuade

them to transfer their right, title and interest of their property to him, which they did. After the sale was effected and the transfer made, the Jews departed and left no trace whither they went, their whereabouts was never discovered, they vanished. Quite a number of prominent Jews have visited the place and have expressed their desire to learn all the facts concerning the Jewish pioneers and their descendants. Now then Alexander Schaeffer, after he had secured the Jews' property, bought several additional tracts from Martin Humas, Durst Humas and Samuel Engle; original letters of said who had some years previous bought these tracts from Richard and Thomas Runsens, of William Penn. The tracts, (then altogether consisted of about four hundred acres) being secured, he set to work to enlarge and lay out the main part of the town north of the Jewish settlement, the plan of plot of the town, which he named Heidelberg, after the town of Heidelberg on the Rhine, included a large centre square, on which he erected a commodious market house, which remained there until the year 1844, when it was razed to the ground in the dead of night by a party of malicious marauders. two large lots for the German Reformed and Lutheran churches, which he gave to the two congregations for nominal sums of money. On the northwest corner of Centre Square he erected a large two-story hostlery, with a vaulted or many arched cellar underneath it, an exact miniature copy of the vaulted cellar of Heidelberg Castle on the Rhine, in which is stored the renowned 40,000 gallon wine cask. The main object of building the impregnable cellar was to render it Indian proof. The founding of the town of Heidelberg occurred in the year 1740. The main walls of the hotel building are still there. The interior has since been renovated and remodeled, but the four walls are intact. After disposing of the major portion of the lots of the town, the founder in 1743 built a dower house on the southwest corner of Main and Carpenter streets, which still remains and is tenanted. He also built a large stone farm house and Swiss barn on a tract of 100 acres close by to the town. A. D. 1760 he transferred to the citizens of the town by deed

for a slight consideration a tract of land, consisting of two-and-one-half acres, on which there is located a copious and never-failing spring of excellent water, so situated as to enable the citizens to convey the water by gravitation to the central part of the town. This was soon done, after a water company was established and a charter granted to said company by the Colonial Assembly of the Great Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, which happened to be the first charter granted to a water company in all the Colonies, subject to the Crown of England, in North America. The spring is surrounded by a group of primeval trees, consisting of giant oaks, several maple and poplar and other trees, equally remarkable. It is an ideal spot and the Indians centuries ago often rested and dozed under these trees, close to the excellent spring. The entire tract surrounding the tract has been embellished and improved by the planting of ornamental evergreens and other choice varieties of shade trees, the erection of a grand band stand, and numerous seats along the elevated part of the park, so that it compares favorably with the parks located at the different cities and towns of the country. The town and township, which was named Lebanon township, after the fur trading post and extended from beyond the Tulpehocken Creek (rendered famous by Conrad Weiser, to the Susquehenna river) and the name of said township, A. D., 1812, given to Lebanon county, furnished quite a number of volunteers to the Continental army during the Revolutionary war, among whom were Captain Henry Schaeffer, son of the proprietor; Sergeant Caspar Kochenderfer, John Smith, Adam Bemisderfer and others, who fought bravely under General George Washington throughout the war. There were several families, whose ancestors are squatted on the tracts of land, which they afterwards bought from Richard and Thomas Penn, sons of William Penn. One of the squatters, Matthias Krall, a native of Switzerland, landed at Philadelphia in 1720, came to Lebanon township, squatted on a tract of 200 acres, and bought the farm from the sons of William Penn in 1740. Allen Krall, a direct descendant of the sixth generation, has the original deed, with the great seal

of the Commonwealth appended to it, owns and resides on the old homestead farm. There are several noteworthy places in the neighborhood, where some parts of the old block houses or forts are still to be seen, and within one half mile of the town there is an old stone farm house, under the front yard of which there is an immense arched cellar, forty feet square, intended as a safeguard against the attacks of the hostile Indians.

Hon. James G. Blaine, the plumed knight of Maine, mentioned in his last political address of the Presidential campaign of 1888, Albany, N. Y., that Benjamin Harrison's political enemies were attempting to subject him to ridicule by stating that the Republican nominee for the presidency was wearing his grandfather's hat. "Why is it," continued Mr. Blaine, "that our horse fanciers go to the sands of Arabia for their thoroughbred horses, noted for their fleetness and endurance; to the shores of Normandy for the noted pedigreed draught horses; to the shires of England for the heavy, neat cattle, and to the isles of Jersey, Guernsey and Alderney for the famous dairy stock, with their beautiful slender limbs, transmitted to them by the graceful deer? Is it not all the more important for a man destined to occupy the position he is a candidate for to possess a pedigree or ancestry which Benj. Harrison's enemies would give their left eye winkers to secure? We Lebanon countians who are the descendants of the first settlers of this beautiful far-famed Lebanon Valley should each and all endeavor to secure all interesting events of the last two centuries, exhume and carefully examine all the old titles and papers, buried in old boxes, chests and out-of-the-way corners and nooks in their garrets or boden kamers, instead of building bonfires with them, which was done some time ago in our district. The bringing into existence of the Lebanon County Historical Society is very commendable and should be encouraged by every true Lebanon countian.

A Song of the Quittapahille.

BY REV. P. C. CROLL, A.-M.

Ye lords and ladies, who have met, in history's hall today,
To celebrate historic deeds since Time has had his way ;
I pray you, listen, while to you a babbling song I sing—
This song of our own Quittapahille and of its close-by spring:

"No mighty ships with cargoes great ride on my gliding wave ;
No lengthy stretch of miles I flow, no cities great I lave ;
Though rocky ledge I tumble o'er, no cataract I know,
Through peaceful vale alone I creep, through pastoral meads I
flow.

While length of miles is not my boast, nor wideness of my wave,
In point of time I stretch beyond e'en Adam's ancient grave ;
Through all the ages of the past of which our histories know,
I was a prehistoric stream till two-hundred years ago.

When Eden's river refreshed the land, I sparkled on my way ;
My bosom rose with Noah's flood, I watched the Red Sea stay ;
I laughed when Elijah prayed for showers, I wept in Babylon,
I hushed when Galilee was calmed by Mary's blessed Son.

I knew the shipwreck of St. Paul, by pen of Luke detailed ;
I gave my might to swell the tide, o'er which Columbus sailed ;
But all this while flowed unobserved, a Hagar in the wilds,
A watery vagabond of the woods, my voice a murmuring
child's.

Without a name I babbled on, to beast and reptile gave
Refreshment sweet and shelter safe by cool and crystal wave;
Till Indian tribes on turtle-soup held first Thansgiving week
And christened me for time to come the famous Snake-hole
Creek.

I courted long my childhood mate in forest dell away,
To join its fortunes with my own and flow the self-same way ;
But Mother Earth opposed the match, rolled up her ridgy nose,
Sent Tulpehocken toward the East and then in anger rose.

Lashed me in hidden caverns so, I started for the West
To bury disappointed hopes, which here could not be blest.
Like Longfellow's Evangeline, my lover's face to see
I searched till all of life was spent, to meet in Death's wide sea.

Determined on my fate, at last, in sullen mood flowed on,
Resolved to murmur of my lot and go through life alone,
I pledged if e'er I'd find a chance to pour in ear of man
I would my cruel lot rehearse, my troubles I would scan.

But aeons passed before the foot of white and civilized man
Pressed virgin soil upon my bank with fixed and definite plan,
He spoke a tongue ne'er heard before, save on the banks of
Rhine.

The language of the Saxon hosts, the sturdy Palatine.

Tw'as Yorrick Steitz and Hannes Licht and Peter Kucher, who
On either bank now reared their homes to grow quite well to do ;
The Kreiders, Orths and Horsts came next this inflex grew
so much

That I my babbling had to change from Indian into "Dutch".

The woodman's axe, the plowman's team, the workshop and
the mill

Soon mingled notes of melody, whose echo ne'er was still,
Log-cabins rose; the Red-men fled; his trail became a road,
While near these German homesteads fair my Indian stream
let flowed.

To rustie swain a love-lit song, to babe a lullaby, —
To Indians trekking toward the west I sang a last good-bye
To harvest hands refreshment brought, the best that tongue
could tell

While migrant rovers found in me a Rebecca at the well.

But all these hard-souled sons of toil on thrift were chiefly bent,
No poetry appealed to them, except with fortune blent;
Like Samson by the Philistines, they bound me hand and fist,
And yoked me to their factories and made me grind their grist,

Until today my power is sapped by race course, pipes and rills
To sprinkle dusty streets I serve, to turn some fifty mills,
A bond-slave of white industries, befouled, begrimed by filth,
The Lazaretto and bug-bear of Lebanon's Board of Health.

With fond affection for the good which I have brought mankind,
To right my wrongs and plead my cause, I've now made up
my mind;

And so I come before you thus, served up in glass and bowl,
To tell you all my grievances and empty out my soul.

To him, who scans my ancestry for traces of blue-blood,
I'd say I am old Ocean's child, akin to Noah's flood.

And though I spring from lowly source in one line of my
birth,

I was a rock-bound Puritan—way back in Mother Earth.

I must confess my path is not the strait and Scriptural course,—
I meander to the right and left—but 'tis to bless-of-course;
I croon and babble on my way; I greet each neighboring creek;
I charm these with my laughter gay, then take them in quite
sleek.

Though smooth and soft in all my turns, I've gotten many a
sliock;

My bed is not of roses made, for 'tis a bed of rock;

Though banks I've two and mostly full I'm bankrupt all the
same;

My assets prove of little worth, I've watered stock, they claim.

To some I seem a curious thing, with both a mouth and head,
Yet while my head is to the east, my mouth lies west instead,
And, though I'm running all my life, I've never changed my
place;
No prize I've won, though I've been timed the first in many
a race.

I have been damned a hundred times, most shamefully abused,
Yet six generations of the past have freely of me used;
The dues and tax which I should have had I a mind to hoard,
Are paid into the coffers of the Lebanon Water Board.

For all the thirst which I have slaked, the fires I have
quenched.

I am paid back in sewer floods with which your streets are
drenched

My good with ill is recompensed, a set of ingrates ye,
What-ever putrid stuff you have, you dump it into me.

Of late I've been reviled and termed a scummy, greasy thing,
So now I take revenge on all that have a spigot spring;
And, since my dues are paid in change of every hue and cry,
I've dished up microbes by the quart, when mountain springs
run dry.

And now, since I have tribute paid ten thousand years or more
By sending all my surplus goods to Big Swatara's shore,
I'll threaten strike by drying up, unless, o'er dell and hill,
Swatara flows its waters to this town on the Quittapahille."

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